



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health and Family Services

Jim Doyle, Governor
Helene Nelson, Secretary

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**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES UNVEILS
STATE PLAN TO PROMOTE HEALTHY LIFESTYLES IN WISCONSIN**

MADISON — Helene Nelson, Secretary of Department of Health and Family Services, unveiled today the Wisconsin Nutrition and Physical Activity State Plan, a long-term plan in the fight against the obesity epidemic. The plan emphasizes being physically active, eating fruits and vegetables, breastfeeding infants, limiting television viewing and other behavioral choices and environmental supports that help balance calorie intake and expenditure.

“We want to help and encourage people in Wisconsin must make better choices about what they eat and how physically active they are in the places where they live, work, learn and play,” said Nelson. “Healthier lifestyles are important for each of us to enjoy our lives to the fullest and avoid serious illness.”

Obesity and weight problems are among the most far-reaching and costliest health problems in Wisconsin. About one in every four Wisconsin adults is obese and almost two-thirds are either overweight or obese. Also, 24 percent of high school students are overweight or at risk of becoming overweight. Obesity-related healthcare costs in Wisconsin are approximately \$1.5 billion annually, of which almost \$626 million are Medicaid and Medicare expenditures.

The plan is a call to action for individuals, schools, communities, businesses, health care providers and policymakers to create an atmosphere that supports healthy lifestyles. This includes promoting a diet with fewer calories from fats and sweets and more from vegetables, fruits, grain products and low fat dairy, meat, fish and poultry and promoting 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity for adults and 60 minutes a day for young people.

A few examples of steps communities can take to implement the plan include opening more farmers’ markets where fruits and vegetables can be easily obtained, increasing healthful alternatives on the menus of restaurants and encouraging more children to walk, or bike to school.

The plan is developed and implemented by the state Department of Health and Family Services and the Wisconsin Partnership for Activity and Nutrition, a group of 50 organizations and agencies statewide.

The Wisconsin Partnership for Activity and Nutrition (WI PAN) is a group comprised of a variety of public and private organizations, local and state government agencies, and coalitions with a common goal of improving the health of Wisconsin residents through improved nutrition and increased physical activity. Public and private sector partners include business owners, community-based organizations, educators, faith-based organizations, food producers and vendors, transportation planners, minority and underserved populations and universities and researchers

“Wisconsin is uniquely situated as a model program for the rest of the nation because our partnership organizations are ready and able to implement the changes needed to produce a healthier state,” said Linda Lee, Nutrition Manager of the La Crosse County Health Department and Chairwoman of the WI Partnership for Activity and Nutrition. “Each partner has goals, strategies and objectives to fulfill on a specific timeline. The entire plan is being evaluated on an on-going basis with a particular eye toward targeted outcomes.”

For a complete copy of the Wisconsin Nutrition and Physical Activity State Plan, log on to
<http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/health/physicalactivity/StatePlan/index.HTM>.

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